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New Era in Intelligence

Spying Became an Electronic Art During Dulles's Career in Field

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Special to The New York Times.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 27 - Intelligence collection was already under way. For more than three thousand years after Joshua sent his spies into Jericho, the techniques of intelligence gathering remained essentially unchanged. Then the scientific revolution, and particularly the progress of electronics, opened revolutionary new possibilities in the arts of espionage.

It is one of the distinctions of Allen Welsh Dulles that his career bridges these two eras of intelligence activity. That is why his impending resignation from the directorship of the Central Intelligence Agency, which was announced today, is something of a landmark in the history of intelligence.

When Joshua's two agents returned to him from Jericho, they were able to report that the morale of the defenders was shaky, "for even all the inhabitants of the country do faint because of us."

This person-to-person, word-of-mouth intelligence was still the basic mode of operation when Mr. Dulles became this country's chief intelligence agent in Switzerland in World War II.

It was to him that German informants came in 1944 with word of the plot, by highly placed anti-Nazis to assassinate Hitler. And again, the following year, the German military came to him with the assurance that the German Army in Italy was ready to surrender.

But when Mr. Dulles became the director of the C. I. A. in 1953, the new scientific era was

War II the chief of British intelligence was known only as "The Brigadier." His real name, Menzies, was not even mentioned at Cabinet meetings.

Mr. Dulles decided from the moment he became director of the C. I. A. that this kind of secrecy was not possible in the United States. Accordingly, he made public speeches, received newspapermen in his office and at his home, and traveled abroad without concealment.

To the dismay of some of his associates, he decided that his Washington staff of many thousands, which was scattered in innumerable buildings, should be housed in one mammoth headquarters located in plain view on a four-lane highway.

"Never try to conceal what cannot or need not be concealed," he told his critics. "When I was in Switzerland during the war, nobody knew who was the British intelligence agent but every one knew who was there for the United States. That was why certain information about what was going on in the enemy countries came to me."

Keeps Tight Security

But although he has not shunned personal publicity, Mr. Dulles has maintained the tightest kind of security at the C. I. A.

This has made it impossible for outsiders to evaluate his own performance as an intelligence chief and that of his agency.

Senator Mike Mansfield of Montana, one of the most influential Democrats in Congress, tried repeatedly to have a Congressional committee established to keep watch over the C. I. A. Mr. Dulles told all his political enemies that he would not allow such a committee to be established, which is sometimes referred to as "the J. Edgar Hoover" to frustrate the attempt.

Critics of the State Department have often said privately that the C. I. A. under Mr. Dulles set its own diplomatic service to make for

This tradition of secrecy was so strong that as late as World War II

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